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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/663,030	09/15/2000	Thaddeus Schroeder	DP-300792	1835

7590 04/23/2004
Edmund P. Anderson
Delphi Legal Staff
Mail Code 480-414-420
P.O. BOX 5052
TROY, MI 48007-5052

EXAMINER

DEPUMPO, DANIEL G

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3611

DATE MAILED: 04/23/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/663,030

Applicant(s)

SCHROEDER ET AL.

Examiner

Daniel G. DePumpo

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
 - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 March 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

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1. In view of the Remand mailed March 31, 2004, PROSECUTION IS HEREBY REOPENED. A new ground of rejection is set forth below.

To avoid abandonment of the application, appellant must exercise one of the following two options:

(1) file a reply under 37 CFR 1.111 (if this Office action is non-final) or a reply under 37 CFR 1.113 (if this Office action is final); or,

(2) request reinstatement of the appeal.

If reinstatement of the appeal is requested, such request must be accompanied by a supplemental appeal brief, but no new amendments, affidavits (37 CFR 1.130, 1.131 or 1.132) or other evidence are permitted. See 37 CFR 1.193(b)(2).

2. After the first office action, claim 1 was amended to add various recitations, including the limitation that the sensor is a "piezoresistive" sensor. In that amendment, and in the subsequent appeal brief, applicant never specifically pointed out that the Taig reference did not teach whether the sensor is a piezoresistive sensor. The Brosh reference was applied against other claims for the teaching of a piezoresistive sensor. The examiner inadvertently continued to reject claim 1 as being anticipated by Taig, instead of relying on the Brosh reference. This oversight has been corrected in the rejections below.

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

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4. Claims 1, 2 and 9 are finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Taig in view of Brosh.

Taig discloses a steering system having the structure as claimed. The system includes a shaft 16, a sensor (20 and 94), a controller 98, a slot 76 and a motor 104. Taig discloses the use of a resistor strain gauge 94, but does not disclose whether it is piezoresistive. Brosh, however, discloses a similar strain gauge sensor including piezoresistive sensors. It would have been obvious to use piezoresistive sensors since Taig is silent regarding a preferred type of resistor and since Brosh discloses that these are desirable and are readily commercially available for this purpose (see Brosh col. 2, lines 20-37).

5. Claims 3-8 are finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Taig and Brosh as applied to claims 1, 2 and 9 above, and further in view of Buhl.

As set forth above, the combination teaches substantially all that is claimed, but does not teach whether the base of the piezoresistive sensor is ceramic. Buhl, however discloses the common use of a ceramic base for a piezoresistive sensor. It would have been obvious to use a ceramic base, as taught by Buhl since this is common and preferred in the art, and since ceramic is readily available for this purpose. Regarding claim 8, Taig does not specifically disclose the use of a Wheatstone bridge. Brosh and Buhl, however, each disclose strain gauge sensors including piezoresistive sensors arranged in a Wheatstone bridge. It would have been obvious to arrange the resistors in a Wheatstone bridge, as taught by Brosh or Buhl since this preferred and well known (see Brosh col. 2, line 50) to balance voltages in a pressure sensor (Buhl (col. 1, line 33)).

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6. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a).

Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).


A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Daniel G. DePumpo whose telephone number is 703 308-1113. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lesley Morris can be reached on 703 308 1113. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

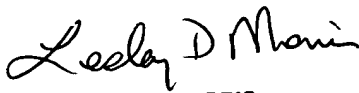
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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Daniel G. DePumpo
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3611

dgd
4/21/04



LESLEY D. MORRIS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600